

Nez Perce–Clearwater National Forests Kamiah Supervisor’s Office Preliminary Project Analysis Decision Summary



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Nez Perce–Clearwater National Forests Supervisor’s Office

Preliminary Project Analysis Decision Summary

The Preliminary Project Analysis (PPA) for the Nez Perce–Clearwater National Forests (NPC) Supervisor’s Office (SO), prepared by A&E Architects, was presented to the Forest Service (FS) for review on September 25, 2018. The final edition of the PPA was delivered at the end of October.

The PPA consisted of the analysis of four alternatives:

- **Alternative #1:** Conceptual design to remodel buildings #2011 (existing main office) and evaluate the accessibility of #1022 & #1023 (Annexes #1 and #2, respectively) to accommodate 65 permanent and six temporary employees. Previous work done by A&E Architects to alter building #2013 (Warehouse) may be utilized in this conceptual design and report.
- **Alternative #2:** Conceptual design of new facilities and infrastructure to serve 65 permanent and 6 temporary office employees. This alternative will also consider the costs of decommissioning surplus buildings.
- **Alternative #3:** Conceptual design to remodel the interior and provide an addition to Building #2011 (main office) for offices and warm storage, if necessary. Maintain an exterior that complements current local style of architecture. Concept should include necessary demolition of buildings or parts of buildings to provide efficient floor plans and parking.
- **Alternative #4:** Conceptual evaluation of a new leased modular facility to meet office and meeting room needs (rather than modification of the existing warehouse) and eliminating the need for the annexes.

A modification to the original contract to incorporate recommendations contained on the 2018 Facilities Master Plan (FMP) was made part way through the contract. This modification required the consultant to ensure that the PPA would not preclude a potential future move of the Lochsa/Powell Ranger District offices to the site as a result of the adoption of any alternative. As a result, the consultant developed alternatives that minimized the amount of building decommissioning at this time.

After a thorough analysis of the PPA, I have chosen to consider modifications of two alternatives to better meet our operational and customer service needs:

- **Alternative #2B:** New facilities and infrastructure to serve 74 permanent and 6 temporary office employees. This alternative differs from Alternative #2 in that new facilities will house the Public Service Center and Conference Spaces.
- **Alternative #4B:** New single leased modular facility to meet office and meeting room needs. This alternative differs from Alternative #4 in that it is a single large modular office building rather than numerous small buildings. During review of this alternative, it was found that this large of a modular facility is considered a custom built office, and is not commercially available for lease. If a modular of that size were used it would be a custom construction and a purchase rather than a lease. Commercially-available leasable modular offices up to 48’x60’ are available

on the open market. These offices are similar in cost per square foot as the smaller leasable modular buildings in the PPA.

Alternative #2B

The detailed description and narrative updates will only describe the way that Alternative #2B differs from Alternative #2.

Executive Summary: Unchanged from Alt #2.

Civil

Demolition: The fencing next to building #2013 will remain in place since no pull-through will be constructed near building #2013.

Access: Highway 12 access to the new SO building will be provided by an extension off the existing drive to the upper parking lot. The new road will take the place of the path in the connecting corridor between the old office #2011 and the new SO.

Parking: The proposed parking areas near the new office site will be expanded to include pull-through parking for the design vehicle. The proposed parking will also be expanded to accommodate all employee parking needs for the SO. No changes to the lower parking lot will be made at this time.

RV Egress: The RV pull through egress and parking will be added at the new office site rather than at building #2013.

General Site

Water, Sanitary Sewer, and Dry Utilities, sections require no changes.

Architectural

Character of Site: No improvements would be made to buildings #2011 and #2013. This portion of the site will remain unchanged in this alternative.

Accessibility: The new SO will accommodate all SO functions so no accessibility modifications are necessary for building #2011.

Campus Connectivity: The new SO will include the proposed service center and conference space, thereby encompassing all SO functions into a single building. Frequently, NPC visitors seek out assistance at the front desk (the public services center) and then are directed to meet with the appropriate NPC employees. The new alternative will eliminate the need for members of the public to walk along the connecting corridor or to drive around to other buildings to visit with NPC employees. It will make public/governmental interactions much smoother and our response times much quicker. This is especially important due to the weather extremes that are often encountered in Kamiah, and the physical exertion that must be made if one intends to utilize the connecting corridor.

Current and Future Function: The large conference space and public interface (service center) will be housed in the new SO.

Phasing/Design Intent: The existing office #2011 will not be modified.

Sustainable Design section requires no changes.

Structural

The new office building will likely have to be sized a little larger to accommodate the large conference space. No modification will be required for building #2011.

Mechanical and Plumbing

No changes to the narratives.

Electrical

Exterior lighting improvements at the lower parking lot and the safety bollard lights along the path will not be required.

Costs Estimate

Cost increases

- Access and parking improvements at the new SO building.
- Larger SO building to accommodate the large conference space – this additional space could be minimized with the ability to divide the large conference space into medium conference spaces.

Cost decreases

- Fencing demolition will not be required next to building #2013.
- The RV pull through egress will not be required at building #2013.
- The improved connecting corridor is no longer required.
- Lighting improvements near building #2011 and along the connecting corridor is no longer required.
- No improvements will be made to buildings #2011 and #2013

Costs for Alternative #2B is expected to be substantially similar to the costs associated with Alternative #2.

Conclusion

When responsible for a National Forest, it is difficult to underscore how important it is to our team to have synergy across functional areas. Our current condition finds SO employees scattered among five different buildings in three different communities. The current SO campus of three buildings holds the majority of the employees, but distance between buildings on the Kamiah campus and between locations of other offices (Kooskia, Orofino etc.) means that employees are not working together as closely, literally and figuratively, as they could be to maximize productivity and efficiency. The Nez Perce and Clearwater National Forests began their move to a common campus just a few short years ago. While the NPC is clearly much more unified now than before the combination, the majority of our employees have not had the opportunity to spend time with their colleagues who used to work on the “other” forest. The multiple-building campus emphasizes the fact that we had once been separate entities and that we still have physical divisions. Due to the remote nature of our communities, our IT infrastructure is far behind the rest of the country. We do not have the advantage of functional video teleconference technology, which increases the divide between remote SO employees and employees in the primary office. Alternatives that bring employees together are extremely important to the success

of the NPC as we strive to remain the leader in flagship targets and other expectations in Region 1 and, to a large degree, within the agency as a whole.

Alternative #2B will best fit the needs of the SO because of the following aspects:

- Secretary Perdue's vision of OneUSDA starts with us. We need to unite our operations on the NPC. One of the advantages of the current Kamiah site is that we have nine acres of space that could easily accommodate other agencies as well. The NPC works closely with Idaho Department of Lands which is right next to our site. Even though we don't share federal ties, we do have fire management agreements and we also utilize the Good Neighbor Authority to share the stewardship of Forest Service and other lands. Constructing a single SO building adjacent to one of our most important partners for the largest forest in the region clearly meets the intent of Secretary Perdue's OneUSDA vision.
- The alternative maximizes our visibility and presence within the community and by visitors headed into the forest. Due to the site's ideal location, access to the SO will be provided by three different highways - US-12, ID-64, and ID-162.
- Public Service is rendered quickly and personally due to all SO employees being in the same building as reception, or what is referred to in the PPA as the Public Service Center.
- Efficiencies are maximized when employees can move quickly from their offices to conference space. A walk along the connecting corridor or a drive to another building is eliminated. This is the only alternative that is truly accessible and gives individuals with disabilities the same rights and ability to talk with their peers and meet with the public. Upon signing the Architectural Barriers Act almost exactly 50 years ago, Lyndon B. Johnson stated that he "will end this needless and cruel discrimination" against Americans with disabilities due to inaccessible infrastructure at federal facilities. It's well past time that we listen to the words of President Johnson and provide a building that meets our own accessibility guidelines.
- Two Green Globes or equivalent requirement for buildings more than 10,000 square feet will set an excellent example to our communities about the commitment that the Forest Service has toward sustainability and conservation.
- Consolidation to a single SO will increase energy efficiency and decrease operational and maintenance costs.
- This alternative maximizes the opportunity for employees and the public to interact. When separated between different buildings, or even when the new office is separated from the conference room, chance encounters, the flow of ideas, and service to the public decreases.
- This alternative maintains the NPC's ability to pursue the co-location of a district office that is 7 miles away in the future if ongoing organizational analysis and a subsequent PPA points us in that direction.